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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between female delinquent behavior and labor market experiences. Data for the research consisted of responses from approximately 4,000 15- to 17-year-old youth who participated in the 1980 New Youth Survey of the National Longitudinal Surveys of Labor Market Experience. Variables examined in the study included delinquency, gender, ethnic origin, age, suspension from school, current residence (urban/rural), and standard metropolitan area. The study showed that 28 percent of all females 15 to 17 years old have consumed alcohol at least once, while 22 percent have smoked marijuana/hashish at least once. Two percent of the females have consumed alcohol at least 50 times and 6 percent have smoked marijuana/hashish at least 50 times. This delinquent behavior was measured against the criterion variable, labor force status. Delinquency suggested either no relationship with the criterion variable or a rather unusual inverse relationship. As the self-reported acts of delinquency increased, so did the employment rates. This unusual relationship may be a result of the following circumstances: students employed have more opportunities to commit delinquent acts than students in school because of the different structures of the environments. The study also showed that suspension from school was far more detrimental than had been believed. Females suspended from school could expect significantly lower rates of employment than females not suspended from school. Through specific intervention strategies, professionals in vocational education can make a difference in the path a troubled youth selects. (Extension tables are included in this report.) (Author/KC)

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# The Labor Market Experiences of Delinquent Youth

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of the American Vocational Association

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between female delinquent behavior and labor market experiences. Data for this research consisted of responses from 15- to 17-year-old civilian non-institutionalized youth who participated in the 1980 New Youth Survey of the National Longitudinal Surveys of Labor Market Experience. Analyses were conducted on approximately 4,000 youth depending on the question analyzed. The criterion variable used in this study was labor force status. The following variates were examined in this study: delinquency, gender, ethnic origin, age, suspension from school, current residence (rural/urban), and whether one lived in a standard metropolitan statistical area.

The use of alcohol and other drugs by teenagers is directly responsible for many of the youth employment problems today. Statistics generated by this study illustrate how serious a problem we now face nationwide. These statistics become more alarming when one realizes they deal only with students enrolled in school. Twenty-eight percent of all females 15- to 17-years old have consumed alcohol at least once. Twenty-two percent have smoked marijuana/hashish at least once. Of greater concern are the females involved in the abuse of alcohol or marijuana. Two percent of the female population have consumed alcohol at least fifty times and six percent of the female population has smoked marijuana/hashish at least fifty times. The 1980 statistics illustrated in Tables 1 and 2 may have more impact when reduced to classroom size: approximately 2 out of every 22 students (ages 15-17) have consumed alcohol 50 or more times;

and 4 out of 22 in that same age group have used marijuana and/or other drugs 50 or more times. Specific amounts consumed, and the time-frame in which the consumption occurred are unknown; nevertheless the figures are useful guides in determining that (1) delinquent behavior has in fact occurred, and (2) the delinquent behavior is repetitive over time. These statistics were generated by cross-tabulation of male/female respondents and the delinquency category.

Two methods of analysis were applied to the data and the criterion variable labor force status. Logistic regression was utilized to illustrate the relationship between the delinquency index and the labor force status of delinquent youth.

The findings were of two types: variates that showed a distinct relationship with the criterion variable; and those which were significant because they did not show any relationship with the criterion variables. Of the former, females exhibited higher occupational aspirations than males (Just, 1984) but still experienced consistantly lower rates of employment than males. Suspension from school was far more detrimental to a student than one had been led to believe. Females suspended from school could expect significantly lower rates of employment than females not suspended from school. As the number of delinquent acts increases the disparity in employment rates for blacks also increases with a full ten percent difference in employment rates for blacks versus Hispanics and a 19 percent difference in employment rates for blacks versus nonblacks/non-Hispanics.

Delinquency suggested either no relationship with the criterion variable or a rather unusual inverse relationship.

as the self-reported acts of delinquency increased so did the employment rates. This unusual relationship may be due to the following circumstances: Students employed have more opportunities to commit delinquent acts than students in school by virtue of the different structured environments. For instance, going to and from work during school hours provides an opportunity for a variety of delinquent acts and, once on the job, young workers encounter many other situations open to delinquent behavior (shoplifting, vandalism, etc.). This study does not include those youth institutionalized by the courts for committing delinquent acts, thus one could hypothesize that we are dealing with the sophisticated delinquent who has been successful in avoiding apprehension.

As both teachers and parents it is time we come to terms with the growing problem of juvenile delinquency. Research supports the fact that juvenile delinquency is no longer confined to lower-class, center-city minority youth. It's widespread costs to society are clearly documented and pervade all levels of our society.

Those of us in vocational education have perhaps the clearest mandate: through specific intervention strategies and innovative teaching techniques we <u>can</u> make a difference in the path a troubled child selects. Whether delinquency will be the beginning of a criminal way of life or whether the delinquent can become instead a productive member of society --- the choice is ours.

## Incidence of Self-Reported Delinquent Behavior

As shown in Table 1, a delinquency profile has been developed utilizing the ten most frequently self-reported delinquent acts committed by the participants.

Table 1

Self-Reported Delinquent Behaviors of Civilian 15- to 17-Year Olds Ordered by Incidence

| Delinquent Behavior | Percent Doing at Least Once |
|---|---|
| Consumed Alcohol | 61 |
| Smoked Marijuana/Hashish | 47 |
| Seriously Threatened to Hit or Kill Someone | 38 |
| Shoplifted | 27 |
| Fought at School or Work | 26 |
| Used Other Drugs | 22 |
| Intentionally Damaged Property | 20 |
| Sold Stolen Goods Knowlingly | 12 |
| Stole Others' Belongings < $50.00 | 11 |
| Stole Others' Belongings > $50.00 | 5 |

Source: Estimated from interviews with 12,686 15- to 17 year olds conducted during the 1980 Youth Survey of the National Longitudinal Surveys of Labor Force Behavior (National Opinion Research Center & Center for Human Resource Research, 1980; Center for Human Resource Research, 1981).

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Table 2

Self-Reported Drug Abuse of Civilian
15- to 17-Year Olds Ordered by Incidence

| Drug | Number[a] | Percent Doing at Least 50 times |
|---|---|---|
| Population | 10,982,300 | |
| Consumption of Alcohol | 768,761 | .07 |
| Male | 549,115 | .05 |
| Female | 219,646 | .02 |
| Smoked Marijuana/Hashish | 1,757,168 | .16 |
| Male | 1,098,230 | .10 |
| Female | 658,938 | .06 |
| Used Other Drugs | 175,716 | .016 |
| Male | 120,805 | .011 |
| Female | 54,911 | .005 |

Source: See Table 1

[a]Numbers in groups may not add to the population total in units, tens, or hundreds places due to rounding and estimation errors.

Table 3

Incidence of Self-Reported Delinquent Behavior
by Characteristics of Civilian 15- to 17-Year-Olds

| Characteristic | Number[a] | Percent of Youth Population | Delinquency Index: No Acts 0 | Q1 1-3 | Q2 4-6 | Q3 7-13 | Q4 14-60 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Population | 10,982,300 | 100 | .169 | .204 | .188 | .226 | .214 |
| Gender | | | | | | | |
| Male | 5,517,990 | 50.25 | .124 | .174 | .169 | .250 | .283 |
| Female | 5,464,310 | 49.75 | .214 | .234 | .235 | .200 | .144 |
| Ethnic Origin | | | | | | | |
| Hispanic | 716,760 | 6.53 | .225 | .243 | .142 | .207 | .181 |
| Black | 1,481,810 | 13.49 | .206 | .330 | .194 | .171 | .097 |
| Nonblack, Non-Hispanic | 8,783,730 | 79.98 | .157 | .180 | .190 | .236 | .236 |
| Age in 1980 | | | | | | | |
| 15 | 3,037,990 | 27.66 | .182 | .243 | .207 | .201 | .165 |
| 16 | 4,131,070 | 37.62 | .165 | .206 | .186 | .230 | .211 |
| 17 | 3,813,260 | 34.72 | .162 | .170 | .173 | .239 | .254 |
| Dependents in 1980 | | | | | | | |
| Yes | 89,050 | .80 | .103 | .323 | .060 | .319 | .192 |
| No | 423,220 | 3.90 | .107 | .191 | .161 | .210 | .328 |
| Unknown | 10,470,030 | 95.30 | .790 | .486 | .779 | .471 | .480 |
| High School Diploma or Equivalent in 1980 | | | | | | | |
| Yes | 92,730 | .80 | .090 | .210 | .240 | .090 | .370 |
| No | 771,240 | 7.00 | .136 | .144 | .146 | .244 | .330 |
| Unknown | 10,118,330 | 92.20 | .774 | .646 | .614 | .666 | .300 |
| Residence in 1980 | | | | | | | |
| Urban | 2,648,400 | 24.16 | .163 | .190 | .182 | .223 | .230 |
| Rural | 8,314,780 | 75.71 | .186 | .246 | .202 | .201 | .162 |
| Unknown | 19,120 | .10 | .651 | .564 | .616 | .566 | .608 |

Source: See Table 1

Note: The number of delinquent acts was determined by summing the respondents' self-reports of the following behaviors: times drank alcohol; times intentionally damaged property; times fought at schoo or work; times shoplifted; times stole others' belongings (<$50); times stole others' belongings (>$50); times seriously threatened to hit someone; times smoked marijuana; times used other drugs; and times sold stolen goods. Respondents may not have been arrested or convicted for any of these acts.

[a]Numbers in groups do not add to the population total in units, tens, or hundreds places due to rounding and estimation errors.

Table 4

Labor Force Status by Quartiles of Delinquency Index and Sex of Civilian 15- to 17-Year-Olds During 1980

| Status | | Total | Delinquency Index: No Reported Acts | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sample Size (N) | | | | | | | |
| | Male | 1897 | 253 | 392 | 322 | 455 | 475 |
| | Female | 1869 | 428 | 497 | 351 | 352 | 241 |
| | Total | 3766 | 681 | 889 | 673 | 807 | 716 |
| In the Labor Force | | | | | | | |
| | Male | 1083 | 131 | 198 | 171 | 279 | 304 |
| | Female | 926 | 176 | 199 | 187 | 205 | 159 |
| | Total | 2009 | 307 | 397 | 358 | 484 | 463 |
| Labor Force Participation Rate (In the Labor Force ÷ N x 100) | Male | 57.09% | 51.78% | 50.51% | 53.11% | 61.32% | 64.00% |
| | Female | 49.55% | 41.12% | 40.04% | 53.28% | 58.24% | 65.98% |
| | Mean | 53.32% | 46.45% | 45.28% | 53.20% | 59.76% | 64.99% |
| Employed[a] | Male | 688 | 84 | 123 | 114 | 187 | 180 |
| | Female | 589 | 118 | 112 | 124 | 135 | 100 |
| | Total | 1277 | 202 | 235 | 238 | 322 | 280 |
| Employment/Sample Ratio (Employed ÷ N) | Male | .36 | .33 | .31 | .35 | .41 | .38 |
| | Female | .32 | .28 | .23 | .35 | .38 | .42 |
| | Mean | .34 | .31 | .27 | .35 | .40 | .40 |
| Unemployed[b] | Male | 395 | 47 | 75 | 57 | 92 | 124 |
| | Female | 337 | 58 | 87 | 63 | 70 | 59 |
| | Total | 732 | 105 | 162 | 120 | 162 | 183 |
| Unemployed Rate (Unemployed ÷ In the Labor Force) x 100 | Male | 36.47% | 35.88% | 37.88% | 33.33% | 32.97% | 40.79% |
| | Female | 36.39% | 32.95% | 43.72% | 33.70% | 34.15% | 37.11% |
| | Mean | 36.43% | 34.42% | 40.80% | 33.52% | 33.56% | 38.95% |
| Out of the Labor Force[c] | Male | 814 | 122 | 194 | 151 | 176 | 171 |
| | Female | 943 | 252 | 298 | 164 | 147 | 82 |
| | Total | 1757 | 374 | 492 | 315 | 323 | 253 |

Source: See Table 1

[a]Anyone working at least one hour a week for pay, or at least 15 hours per week in a family business without pay is employed.

[b]Anyone without a job and actively seeking work is unemployed.

[c]Anyone without a job and not looking for one is out of the labor force.

Table 5

Rate of Employment[a], Delinquency Index, and Characteristics of Civilian 15- to 17-Year-Olds During 1980

| | | Delinquency Index[b] | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Characteristic | Total | No Reported Acts | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 |
| Sample | .34 | .30 | .27 | .35 | .40 | .40 |
| Gender | | | | | | |
| Male | .36 | .33 | .31 | .35 | .41 | .38 |
| Female | .31 | .28 | .22 | .35 | .38 | .42 |
| Ethnic Origin | | | | | | |
| Black | .22 | .17 | .20 | .22 | .25 | .24 |
| Hispanic | .30 | .23 | .21 | .38 | .35 | .34 |
| Nonblack/Non-Hispanic | .49 | .60 | .59 | .40 | .41 | .43 |
| Age | | | | | | |
| 15-16 | .37 | .31 | .36 | .40 | .35 | .43 |
| 17 | .49 | .57 | .29 | .53 | .59 | .47 |
| Suspended from School | | | | | | |
| Yes | .28 | .20 | .23 | .29 | .29 | .37 |
| No | .36 | .30 | .27 | .37 | .44 | .41 |
| Current Residence | | | | | | |
| Rural | .33 | .27 | .24 | .36 | .42 | .35 |
| Urban | .35 | .31 | .27 | .35 | .39 | .40 |
| SMSA | | | | | | |
| Yes | .35 | .29 | .27 | .36 | .40 | .41 |
| No | .32 | .31 | .24 | .33 | .39 | .32 |

Source: See Table 1

[a]The rate of employment is the ratio of the number employed to the number in the civilian population in a particular group.

[b] Delinquency Index is quartiles of self-reported delinquent acts greater than zero.

[c]Age category contains unusually high amount or missing values which were deleted from analysis.

# Indicators of Potential Delinquency

Student's Name_____ Person Referring/Person Completing (Circle one)

School_____ _____

Date_____ Grade _____

Reason for Referral _____

**Directions.** If you have witnessed the behavior, place a check on the space before the statement.

## I. Behavior in Your Classroom

### A. Physical Symptoms

_____ Noisy, boisterous
_____ Quiet
_____ Underweight
_____ Obese
_____ Smells of smoke, alcohol, or marijuana
_____ Coming to school inappropriately dressed
_____ Tense, seems on edge
_____ Slurred speech
_____ Seeks nurse
_____ Appears sleepy
_____ Unexplained, frequent physical injuries
_____ Deteriorating personal appearance
_____ Sleeping in class
_____ Frequent cold-like symptoms
_____ Unstead on feet
_____ Frequent complaints of nausea or vomiting
_____ Glassy, bloodshot eyes

### B. Academic Performance

_____ Poor classroom grades
_____ Drop in grades, lower achievement
_____ Needs directions given individually
_____ Decrease in class participation
_____ Doesn't ask for help
_____ Failure to complete assignments
_____ Short attention span, easily distracted
_____ Poor short term memory, i.e., can't remember from one day to next
_____ Functioning below grade level
_____ Failed one or more subject areas

### C. Study Habits

_____ Never has enough time to finish
_____ Finds it hard to study
_____ Homework sloppy or incomplete
_____ Lacks desire to do well in school

CHILD STUDY CHECKLIST (Continued)

tudy Habits (Continued)

_____ Gives up easily
_____ Bright, but doesn't apply self
_____ Prefers to work alone
_____ Does not complete daily assignments
_____ Disorganized

D. School Attendance
(List dates beside area)

_____ Absenteeism
_____
_____ Tardiness
_____
_____ Loss of recess
_____ Cutting class
_____ Lunch--Isolates self
_____ Lunch--Isolated by staff
_____ Suspension

E. Disruptive Behavior*

_____ Defiance of rules
_____ Irresponsibility, blaming, denying
_____ Fighting
_____ Cheating
_____ Sudden outbursts of anger; verbally abusive to others
_____ Obsence language, gestures
_____ Attention-getting behavior
_____ Crying
_____ Extreme negatives
_____ Highly active

F. Atypical Behavior*

_____ Change in friends
_____ Erratic behavior
_____ Sudden popularity

F. Atypical Behavior* (Continued)

_____ Older social group
_____ Younger social group
_____ Sexual behavior in public
_____ Disoriented
_____ Unrealistic goals
_____ Inappropriate responses
_____ Depression
_____ Seeks adult advice
_____ Defensive
_____ Withdrawn, difficulty in relating to others
_____ Talks freely about drug use

G. Home Problems*

_____ Family problems
_____ Runaway
_____ Job problems

H. Social Skills

_____ Lack of peer relationship
_____ Disrespectful toward authority
_____ Dress habits
_____ Cleanliness
_____ Inappropriate behavior
_____ Disturbs other students
_____ Slow in making friends
_____ Is stubborn
_____ Negative leader
_____ Argues with teacher
_____ Has no friends
_____ Hits and pushes other students
_____ Teases other students
_____ Makes inappropriate remarks

*Please comment and be specific with examples when possible.

T, CHILD STUDY CHECKLIST (Continued)

H. Social Skills (Continued)

_____ Angered by criticism
_____ Lack of self-confidence
_____ Resents authority
_____ Has to be center of attention
_____ Appears depressed

I. Background Information

_____ Previously retained
_____ Recent divorce or separation
_____ Single parent household
_____ Lives with someone other than parent
_____ Suspected child abuse or neglect
_____ Takes medication
_____ Previously involved with counseling

J. Related Services

_____ Resource Room
_____ School Counselor
_____ Reading Specialist
_____ Speech and Language
_____ Social Services
_____ GATE

K. Academic Information
(Check test/year given/score)

_____ CTBS 19___ (language score ____; I.Q. ____)
_____ Slosson (I.Q. ____)
_____ Gates-MacGinitie (vocabulary ____; comprehension ____; total ____)
_____ Peabody Picture Vocabulary (Raw score ____)
_____ Key Math (G.E. _____)
_____ Binet: 19___ (I.Q._____)
_____ WISC-R: 19___ (verbal _____; performance _____; I.Q. _____)

L. Additional Tests

(Didn't qualify for special education.)

M. Special Class Reports

N. Illicit Activities

_____ Vandalism
_____ Involvement in thefts and assaults
_____ Possession of paraphenalia (roach clips, bongs, etc.)
_____ Possession of drugs
_____ Selling drugs
_____ Carrying a weapon
_____ Possession of cigarettes
_____ Possession of pornographic material
_____ Possession of unauthorized medication

## IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHERS

I. Social Consequences of Delinquency

- The school is more influential than the home during the years when delinquency is at it's peak. (Just, 1984)
- Until recently, delinquency prevention and control programs were not available in school systems.
- Schools of the 1980's have a tremendous stake in reducing the costs of these antisocial behaviors by developing and implementing appropriate intervention strategies. (School violence creates unwarrrented expenses to all taxpayers.)

II. Alternative Education Programs

1. The education materials and tasks are appropriate to the student's present level of skills.
2. Their content is relevant to today's work world.
3. The student is allowed to master them at his/her own pace.
4. Evaluation is based on individual progress - comparisons are made with the student's own performance not with norms for age or grade.
5. Suspension of the social norms that typically govern school environments.
   (a) More informal teacher/student role relationships.
   (b) Teachers must realize they may be closer to the student than the parents or parent.
   (c) Flexibility in teaching methodologies and discipline procedures; teachers must be able to alter their planned activities to accomodate the mood of the class as a whole.
6. Peer Support Groups
   (a) Develop self-esteem of student members
   (b) Students develop ground rules to follow
   (c) Students monitor behavior activities of each other to assure compliance
   (d) Confidentiality - nothing discussed in support group leaves the room
   (e) Rigorous honesty between support members is required at all times
   (f) Attendance is mandatory
   (g) Members are encouraged to participate in every support session